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CONFIDENTIAL

Chrono

26 July 1988

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director, Foreign Broadcast Information Service

FROM: [redacted] 25X1
Deputy Director, FBIS

SUBJECT: DI/CRES Survey of FBIS Products and Services

1. As with most surveys, one can find within the results whatever one wants to find. In brokering this survey at our request, CRES worked through the executive officers of each DI office. It is clear from the results that some executive officers (NESA, SOVA, EURA, ALA) make a valiant effort to obtain from the analysts and managers what we were after. Much of the information from these offices is useful and offers the kind of feedback we should have on a regular basis. Responses from other DI offices (OSWR, OGI), on the other hand, either consist of a compendium of individual preferences of office analysts or are too general to be useful.

2. From any perspective, the survey clearly indicates that the existing FBIS products and services are of high importance to the DI analytical process. Statistically, these products constitute 20-30 percent of all information used by the DI in their production of finished intelligence. Selected DI offices, in fact, claim that up to 80 percent of their product is based on FBIS reporting. In sum, the survey documents the importance of FBIS material to the DI, a fact that could be helpful in supporting program and budget requests. I suggest that we issue the survey in its totality to the four groups in FBIS, while cautioning the chiefs that many of the survey recommendations require further study before we as an office can recommend or take action.

3. One area where this survey unfortunately will not help us is in determining relative geographical/country priorities within the DI. I'm afraid that your desired "corporate response" did not materialize. It is quite clear that this survey looked at the FBIS product from the point of view of requirements, not priorities. As we struggle with the budget pressures of the next fiscal years, ultimately we will have to base some of our tough resource decisions on priorities, not requirements. If it comes to that, FBIS management will have to engage DI management, not analysts or even CRES, and negotiate the least painful path to take.

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4. It was interesting to read in the survey that the DI collectively realizes that there are limitations to the resources FBIS can devote to collection. With limited resources, we have all the more reason to reach an agreement on priorities to which we can apply these resources and thus satisfy the DI's most important needs. Of similar interest is the survey's admission that the DI also is limited in the amount of increased reporting from FBIS it could absorb--another argument for reaching agreement on priorities.

5. One other generalization can be made about this survey: many DI analysts need to be better informed about FBIS. The survey is replete with statements that would not have been published had the spokesmen known about FBIS collection procedures and capabilities. The false understandings range from a belief that open sources in most countries do not carry highly sensitive material to expectations that a foreign language article can be translated instantaneously. I feel that FBIS itself is partially at fault in this situation and must make improved efforts to enlighten the DI officers on how we do our business. This might be achieved through briefings or by hosting DI delegations here at Reston. Perhaps our Liaison and Requirements Branch could discuss this with CRES or another DI component to determine how we can establish such a program.

6. Several points are fairly consistent throughout the survey but we are aware of most of them. For example, the call for including the JPRS serials in SAFE and for quicker delivery of JPRS products by any means is not a surprise. What might be in order is an explanation to the DI that the SAFE issue is not of our making and that we are in agreement with the DI. There is also a universal recommendation that the Daily Reports not be published because most of the material in them is already available to the analysts via SAFE. Although I can understand why the survey recommends such, we cannot abrogate our responsibility to the rest of the Intelligence Community. Since the bulk of our customers have no access to the electronic receipt of the field file, the Daily Report publications will continue to be the principal means of getting our field bureau monitored material to them. The DI analysts should also understand that the Daily Reports contain increasing amounts of material which normally would be published in JPRS but which are now being published in the Daily Reports for quicker delivery to the DI and all our consumers.

7. Several other observations on the survey:

--In NESA, our material draws generally high praise, with special honors given to our reporting on Israel ("single most important source"), Iran (including live TV), and Libya. Some useful guidance for increased coverage by both Ops and Prod is also offered.

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--SOVA gave us high marks for our coverage but also showed considerable naivete about how we do our business. The analysts here see the increasingly liberal publishing standards in the Soviet Union resulting in even greater dependence on FBIS material. Good, detailed feedback by subject offered.

--OGI's response was disappointing in many ways; reflects individual analysts' views more than office's. Some statistics on analysis based on our reporting are as high as 95 percent (Mongolia) on certain topics

--The response from EURA was extremely positive, offering useful data. It is also clear from the reply, however, that many analysts in this office need to understand FBIS better. Reliance on FBIS for East Europe material is "at least 40-60 percent." West European TV is valued highly.

--The contribution from OEA was generally positive, but needs fleshing out before we could draw any useful conclusions. Office finds the field reporting "critically important"; JPRS reporting gets very mixed reviews. One interesting sidelight: we are asked to reduce coverage of the clandestine VNS!

--Very concise but very useful feedback comes from ALA. Highest marks go to our reporting on Cuba, South Africa, Brazil, and Central America. This office, like several others, says we could dispense with production of Foreign Press Notes.

--Based on this survey, OIA's use of FBIS materials is limited. Not surprisingly, however, the best praise we got for videotape services comes from this office.

--The response from LDA appears to be of minimal use. Replies run the full gamut of analytical likes and dislikes. Would like to see more TV coverage.

--The most disappointing response came from OSWR, which offers some nice words but gives no guidance at all on how to refine or improve our reporting.

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